

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

No notice can be taken of anonymous communications. Whenver intended for insertion, the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith, should be given. Communications are respectfully requested to write on one side of the paper only.

The Daily Press

HONGKONG, OCTOBER 23RD, 1875.

The Tung-wah Hospital has lately been brought into prominence again in matters that are admittedly beyond its province. We have had occasion at various times to draw attention to the powers assumed and exercised by this most extraordinary institution. When, soon after its inauguration, we pointed out the probability of its being a hospital in name only, and in reality the centre of an organisation among the natives for the purpose of taking steps to manage sundry matters their own way, the prediction was scouted as a slur. Before very long, however, it was discovered that the Hospital Committee were engaged in other business than seeing to the welfare of patients, and it had at length been admitted that, if the medical work of the Hospital was not absolutely subsidiary to other interests looked after by the committee, it was by no means its *raison d'être*. But while this fact was generally admitted, no official notice was taken of their doings, and the Hospital Committee grew bolder. They not only discussed all public matters affecting the Chinese population, but waited in deputation upon the Governor to make representations to him of their views on divers subjects. By degrees their influence among their fellow-countrymen varied greater, until at last the Chinese population have come to regard the Tung-wah Hospital as being invested with powers which belong only to the Government officials. The medical work it does is comparatively trifling compared with its magnitude as an institution. The taking cognisance of public matters, and interfering in business altogether outside its proper and legitimate functions, mainly concern the Committee. And they lose no opportunity of asserting their influence both with the authorities and with their own countrymen. Hence it is the Tung-wah Hospital has grown into an institution for the discussion of all matters affecting the Chinese population of Hongkong, and its original mission has been in a great measure lost sight of.

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THE NEW COSMOBOLIVIAN DOCKS AT KOWLOON.

These docks, which have just been opened, were commenced in November, 1871, and have consequently been just four years in course of construction. They are situated on the west side of Kowloon, facing Stone's Bay, and consist of two docks, the Inner and the Outer. The Inner Dock is 212 feet in length, 70 feet in width, and 12 feet in depth. The Outer Dock is 212 feet in length, 70 feet in width, and 12 feet in depth. The docks are faced with granite in the most substantial manner. In proof of the strength of their construction is the fact that the Inner Dock, which was opened on September 18th, 1874, the works suffered no injury in any way, though they were, of course, completely flooded, the sea-water, which was at the time at a high stage, being driven into the docks. The docks would have been opened last spring, but the proprietors were disappointed in the working of some of the necessary machinery. The docks were designed by the late Mr. Nelson Spratt, of the firm of Spratt & Co., the proprietors of the docks. The docks were designed and constructed under the superintendence of Messrs. Wilson and Salway. The first vessel to enter the docks was the *SS. Spratt*, on Thursday last, and we hear that she will be followed soon by the *SS. Spratt*.

POLICE INTELLIGENCE.

22nd October.

BEFORE MR. HON. C. M. J.

ROBERTSON FROM DOCKS.

Shik Abraham, a watchman at the Hang-bun Docks, charged one Jim Lok with robbing him of a watch and a gold chain, and also with assaulting him.

The prisoner denied the charge. He was recognised as having been present in 1867 when the *SS. Spratt* was at the docks, and he said he was sent to six months' hard labour.

Hedjoo Porjoo, watchman at the Cosmopolitan Docks at Kowloon, charged one Hui Chai Hui with stealing from him a watch and a gold chain, and also with assaulting him.

The prisoner admitted that he picked them up, but denied that he intended to steal them. He said he was sent to six months' hard labour.

AN ARTFUL THIEF.

Yan Ahm, a stonecutter at Sunfong, charged a man, named Ahm Ahm, with stealing a jacket and a watch from him, and also with assaulting him.

The prisoner appeared in dock with a few scratches on his forehead, and tried to make out that the prosecutor and a witness tried to rob him, and that he was sent to six months' hard labour.

Inspector Youngson showed that the prisoner had no such marks when brought to the station, and that he was sent to six months' hard labour.

The prisoner was sentenced to three months' hard labour.

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New proofs of the foregoing assertions are frequently turning up. Only a few days since, in the Police Court, one of the intending emigrants to Aden in his evidence stated he had threatened the prisoner that he would go to the Tung-wah Hospital and complain that he had been duped and beaten. Mr. Russell very properly pointed out to him that the Hospital was a place to get cured if he had sustained any bodily injury, but certainly not the right quarter to seek redress for wrongs of the sort he complained of. The other day, in the Summary Court, the attorneys of parties, with the consent of Mr. Justice Snowden, referred a case for decision to the same august body. It seems, however, that in this case the Chinese were dissatisfied with the decision of the Committee, and complained to his Lordship that they had not received justice. Mr. Snowden then had the Chairman of the Committee before him, and the impression produced on his Lordship's mind is best shown by the fact that he feels compelled to call witnesses and go fully into the case himself. The fault in this instance is not so much in the fact that the result of their investigation was unsatisfactory, but that the Committee, by allowing a case to be referred to them, gave them a status to which they have no right, and helped to perpetuate the evil so long complained of. It is to be hoped such a mistake will be avoided in the future, and no countenance given to the growing pretensions of the Hospital Committee by the Civil Courts. Another phase of this insupportable and many-sided institution has lately come to light. The Hospital has been turned into a house agency. On the doors of several houses in the colony may now be seen huge placards informing the public that they must apply to the Tung-wah Hospital for rent and other particulars of possession. This, however, only important as showing into what various ples the Committee have inserted their fingers.

It is much to be regretted that an institution started with its avowed object should have been turned to purposes so alien from it. Of course the Committee are very blameable for having so audaciously usurped functions it was never intended they should possess. But they have, it must be confessed, received a good deal of encouragement in their assertions, and this from a source where it ought least to have emanated. At the outset the Government of this Colony, though probably without intending it, invested the Committee with an undue amount of importance. In its eager desire to lend support to the Hospital as a benevolent establishment, the Government placed it under an Ordinance, granted it large sums of money, and, in effect, made it a quasi-Government institution, thus adding very materially to its influence with the native community at large, in whatever direction that influence might happen to be exercised. All this was done unwittingly, and with the best intentions. But when the Government saw the Committee developing a tendency to take up subjects foreign to their capacity as the governing body of an hospital it should have promptly put a check upon it. Instead, however, of doing so, the Government has rather helped to foster the abuses of this institution. It has, time after time, indirectly given its sanction to the assumptions of the Hospital Committee by receiving them as deputations in cases where their interference in such a capacity should not have been admitted. There can be no objection to a body of Chinese waiting as a deputation upon the Governor of the Colony to complain of a grievance, or to advocate a measure of reform, but it is highly objectionable that such functions should be vested in an Hospital committee, however well informed on such matters its members may individually or collectively happen to be. It is a most preposterous and unprecedented thing that the committee of an hospital should be recognised on all occasions in the exponents of native opinion on matters of administration by which Chinese are affected. There is, too,

some danger of the lower and more ignorant classes mistaking the vocations and powers of the Hospital Committee and resorting to them for counsel and assistance which can only be legally procured from the constituted authorities. It is surely quite time that the Tung-wah Hospital Committee should subside into their proper position, and occupy themselves exclusively, while in that capacity, with the useful and benevolent work entrusted to them. His Excellency the Administrator would no doubt take a cup of Congee with the Committee with equal affability if they were shorn of some of the fictitious powers which they have so strangely acquired.

Sir Charles Dilke, it is reported, is about to visit China and Japan.

The Oolong tea season has been about 40,000 mounds, or 8,000 mounds less than the collection of last year.

We are requested to state that, commencing from tomorrow, the Service at St. Peter's (Roman) church will in future be held at 11 o'clock, and not at 10, as is provided with Freyer and Hyman Books.

The piracy and murder case again occupied the attention of the Chief Justice and jury in the Supreme Court yesterday. There were some thirteen witnesses to be called for the prosecution, but the case against the prisoners was not nearly so strong as it appeared. The Court was adjourned until to-day.

Mr. Justice Snowden was engaged in the Summary Court yesterday in hearing the case of *Meitua v. Payne*, £30. Plaintiff is a publican in Queen's Road, and defendant was his bar-keeper. The case was brought to recover for the liquor supplied to a customer, who had failed to pay. His Lordship gave judgment for defendant.

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